DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 803 HE 018 985

TITLE	Microcomputing Facilities: Objectives and Policies. The Microcomputing Program at Drexel University.
INSTITUTION	Drexel Univ., Philadelphia, PA. Microcomputing Program.
REPORT NO	MWPA-A-84-6
PUB DATE	May 85
NOTE	12p.; For related documents, see HE 018 983-984.
AVAILABLE FROM	Drexel University, Working Paper Series, Microcomputing Program, Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Philadelphia, PA 19104.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrative Policy; *College Faculty; *College Students; Computer Assisted Instruction; *Computer Oriented Programs; *Educational Facilities; Graduation Requirements; Higher Education; *Microcomputers; School Space; Use Studies
IDENTIFIERS	*Drexel University PA

ABSTRACT

Microcomputing facilities at Drexel University are described. In 1983 the university instituted a policy requiring all students to have personal access to a microcomputer. Students keep their computers in their dorm rooms or off-campus living quarters. To provide access to students while they are on campus, clusters of university-owned machines have been set up for student on-campus use, and additional clusters have been established as classrooms and print stations. University-owned machines have been allocated to academic departments for use by faculty or placed in clusters, and one cluster has been designated for faculty (and later graduate student) use. Extensive user support facilities and services have been also established to assist users. The nature and purposes of the following facilities are described: the faculty access cluster, student access clusters, and microcomputer classrooms. Specific features include: 20 Macintosh computers in the faculty access cluster, which provided faculty a place to learn how to use the Macintosh and later served as a work environment; three student access clusters; and three rooms for use by faculty wishing to use computers with students during class time. A policy statement regarding all user support facilities is attached. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Microcomputing Facilities: Objectives and Policies

Drexel University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Drexel University

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Microcomputing Facilities: Objectives and Policies

Drexel University

MWPS A 84-6
May, 1985

Requests for copies of papers in the Microcomputing Working Papers Series should be sent to: Working Paper Series, Microcomputing Program, Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Microcomputing Facilities: Objectives and Policies

In 1983 Drexel University instituted a policy that requires all its students to have personal access to a microcomputer. This policy is being phased in one class at a time, beginning with the freshman class entering Fall 1983. The microcomputer selected to meet the requirements of students throughout the University was the Macintosh. (See "Choosing the Machine," publication of the Drexel University Microcomputing Program, ERIC #ED 250 969.)

As a result of this policy, by late 1984 over 5,000 Macintosh microcomputers were owned by members of the University community (students, faculty, and staff) and by the University itself. It is expected that there will be more than 12,000 microcomputers on campus by Fall 1988.

Students keep their microcomputers in their dorm rooms or in their off-campus living quarters. To provide access to students while they are on campus, clusters of University-owned machines have been set up for student on-campus use, and additional clusters have been established as classrooms and print stations. University-owned machines have been allocated to academic departments for use by faculty (whether or not they had opted to buy a machine for home use) or placed in clusters, and one cluster has been designated for faculty (and later graduate student) use.

Extensive user support facilities and services have been established to assist the vast numbers of users that resulted from the introduction of microcomputing across the curriculum. The nature and purposes of the following facilities are described below: Faculty Access Cluster, Student Access Clusters, and Microcomputer Classrooms. The user hotline, walk-in consulting services, and print stations are described elsewhere. (See A 84-9, "Hotline and Walk-In Consulting," and A 84-15, "Print Station Operation," in this series.) A software review center, established to enable faculty members to examine software to determine its usefulness for their courses, is also the subject of a separate paper (A 84-14, "Software Review Center"). A policy statement regarding all user support facilities is attached.

Faculty Access Cluster

One of the first facilities set up was the Faculty Access Cluster. This facility consisted of a cluster of 20 Macintosh computers in a room adjoining a Student Access Cluster and across the hall from the Walk-In Consulting area.

The original purpose of the Faculty Access Cluster was to provide faculty with a place to learn how to use the Macintosh and, once initial learning took place, a working environment. During the first year of the Microcomputing Program, admittance to this facility was restricted to faculty, and later teaching assistants. Because admittance was restricted to faculty, the room offered both privacy and security to faculty members. Privacy was considered important at first so that faculty could learn how to use the microcomputers without exposing occasional naivete or ineptitudes to the general observation of students (who tended to know much more about microcomputers than the faculty in general). This may or may not have been a real issue, but since some faculty seemed to be apprehensive about their abilities to deal with the new technology, it was decided that faculty should be able to learn in as reassuring an atmosphere as possible. Security was definitely important so that faculty could be free to develop and print out test materials without the possibility of students looking over their work.

Another factor in choosing to establish a separate faculty access area was the desire to create a place in which faculty would come together to see and discuss each other's work, to share discoveries, and to problem-solve together. This goal was certainly achieved, and the Faculty Access Cluster probably played a crucial role in bringing about the involvement and enthusiasm of the faculty so early in the program. The Faculty Access Cluster served as a common area of focus where faculty from all departments throughout the University came together, often meeting for the first time, to explore a new technology and its possible applications to their work. A real spirit of comaraderie was often visible within the room. New friendships were formed. Individual faculty members were given a sense that they were involved in a larger venture rather than just trying out something on their own.

For the first six months that the room was open, a technical consultant was always in the room to provide assistance to faculty members. This assistance took the form of both training and troubleshooting. The consultants were employees of the Microcomputing Program[1] who were well versed in the use of all software directly associated with the University-wide program. This software consisted of the five (later 7) programs bundled with all Macintoshes purchased through the University in support of the academic program.[2] Consultants assigned to this room also helped faculty learn techniques of disk management, file transfer, cutting and pasting among applications, and other basic operations. By Fall '84 it no longer seemed necessary to provide this support since by that time most faculty were well versed in the use of the Macintosh. Faculty needing assistance after that time were able to get help from consultants in the adjacent student area, who would move into the faculty area when faculty asked for their assistance, or from consultants across the hall in the Walk-In Consultant area.

In addition to microcomputers and printing equipment, materials developed by Apple Computer Co. to assist Macintosh users (i.e., manuals, diskettes, and audio tapes) and copies of software bundled with the Drexel computers were, and still are, available for use in this general area. These materials are available from an access monitor stationed at the entrance to both student and faculty access areas.

---

[1] Drexel University has a cooperative education program in which participating students (about 95% of all undergraduates) take a five-year course of study which includes three six-month periods working in jobs related to their majors. Approximately 40 cooperative education students each term are employed as consultants and technicians by the Microcomputing Program.

[2] Programs originally bundled with the Macintosh were MacWrite (wordprocessing), MacPaint (graphics), Multiplan (spreadsheet), and MacPascal and MacBasic (programming). During the second year of the program, DUTalk (terminal emulation) and 1st Base (a relational database management system) were added.

Faculty use of this area was very heavy during the first nine months the facility was open. By the beginning of 1985, however, most of the faculty members had either purchased their own Macintoshes or had been given access to one through their departments. They therefore didn't need to go to another building to have access to a machine. They also didn't need the consultants' help as much as they were either quite proficient in whatever special uses they had found for the computers or they had colleagues who were proficient. In others words, by 1985 the chemistry faculty had become expert at a full array of functions that pertained to using a Macintosh in chemistry; the humanities faculty knew how to exploit the power of this computer in their field; and throughout the campus it was possible to find some person within almost every department who could provide technical assistance appropriate to the work in that academic area.

At the same time as faculty use of the area diminished, graduate student need for such a facility increased. As use of the microcomputer was integrated into more and more courses, graduate students needed to be able to teach microcomputer uses and work with software applications being used in the courses in which they worked. The Faculty Access Area was therefore opened first to teaching assistants, then to graduate students as a whole on an experimental basis. Faculty members did not object to this change, so the facility is remaining open to graduate students.

Student Access Clusters

Three student access clusters have been set up to provide students with a place to work on the Macintosh while they are on campus. One cluster (containing 30 Macintoshes) was set up as soon as the computers arrived on campus and is located adjacent to the Faculty Access Cluster. The others were established Fall '84. One is in the basement of the main library and contains 21 machines for general use, 15 for printing only, and two are hard-wired into Telenet to provide access to BRS databases for use in bibliographic retrieval. (See A 85-1, "Planning for End-User Database Searching," in this working paper series, for a description of the bibliographic search set up in this facility.) The third student access facility is located within the general area of the Physics department. This room serves primarily as a microcomputer classroom during Fall terms (see

below). At other times of the year it is used as a student access area except when scheduled for occasional classroom use.

A technician is available at all three sites to provide assistance in the use of the equipment. In addition, the same consulting services, instructional materials, and software as described above under Faculty Access Cluster are available in the Student Access Cluster adjacent to that location. Faculty-developed software for use within courses is often made available at this location, either for student use or for student copying for use elsewhere. (For more information on student access to faculty-developed software, see A 84-8, "Software Duplication and Distribution," in this series.)

Microcomputer Classrooms

To date, three rooms have been set aside for faculty wishing to use computers with their students during class time. Each room has a specific function as well as being available for general classroom use.

One room contains up to 20 Macintosh computers hardwired into Telenet for easy access to bibliographic databases available through BRS. During Winter term of each year, all students taking the freshman writing sequence (approximately 1600 per year) use this room to locate sources for a research paper. (See F 84-2, "On-Line Database Searching in the Freshman Research Paper Course," for a description of this process.) At other times of the year, the room is used for additional sections of this same course, for general classroom use, or as a student access area. The number of computers in the room at any time is based on need.

Another classroom, mentioned above, contains 30 Macintosh computers and is located in the area of the Physics department. It is used during Fall term as a laboratory for students taking an introductory course in the use of Pascal. (All basic science and engineering students are required to take this course. Annual enrollment is about 1200.) During other terms, this room is used for additional sections of this course, for general classroom use, or as a student access area.

And finally, a third classroom contains 30 Macintosh computers and has two wall-mounted monitors so that students can both observe their instructor's screen and work on their own computers. In the next few months, all computers in this room will be linked together and will share file serving and print capabilities. Access to Telenet is currently available within the room.

Microcomputing Facilities Policies Statement

Introduction

This document describes the purpose of and the authorized users for all facilities under the direct responsibility of the Drexel University Microcomputing Program. It is subject to change as determined by those responsible for the management of the facilities.

Guidelines and procedures for the operations of all facilities are outlined in "Microcomputer Facilities Procedures and Regulations." Hours and locations of facilities are contained in "Microcomputer Hours and Locations."

Consulting Services (Hotline and Walk-in)

The microcomputer consulting services support the Drexel University community on microcomputer hardware and software and advises the community on procedures and policies related to the Microcomputing Program. Consultation takes two forms: telephone and walk-in consultation. Assistance with software and hardware operation is available in all user facilities.

The entire Drexel Community is encouraged to use the consulting services as needed.

Faculty Access Cluster

The Faculty Access Cluster provides a general access facility where Drexel University faculty and graduate students may use microcomputer hardware, software, and documentation. Products supported by Drexel University are available for use in the facility.

Current full-time, adjunct, and Evening College faculty may be admitted into the Faculty Cluster. On an experimental basis, graduate students may also use the Faculty Cluster.

Student Access Clusters

A Student Access Cluster is a general access facility where Drexel University students may work with microcomputer hardware, software, and documentation. Products supported by Drexel University are available for use in the facility.

The following students are permitted in a student cluster:

1. Undergraduate students who enrolled as freshmen for Fall Term 1983 or any time thereafter and transfer students eligible to purchase a Macintosh.
2. Authorized undergraduates who are taking courses which require use of the Macintosh.
3. On an experimental basis, all other students (undergraduate, graduate, and Evening College) during normal evening and weekend hours.
4. Others needing access for limited periods of time and in small numbers, when authorized by the Director of the Microcomputing Program.

In the event that the facility becomes heavily used, users in the latter two groups may not be admitted.

Print Stations

Drexel University has provided print stations around campus so that users of the Macintosh may print out single copies of their work. General time limits are set on print stations to insure that adequate time is given for printing work, but that a single user does not monopolize a printer for long periods of time.

The entire Drexel Community may use print stations.

Microcomputer Classrooms

Microcomputer classrooms are designed to support instruction requiring a full classroom of Macintosh computers with or without special capabilities (i.e., telecomunications or networking). Classrooms are meant for use by single or irregular class sessions or training sessions under the supervision of an instructor. Classrooms are generally scheduled with the Computer Center, but may be opened as general access facilities if the need arises. Software and manuals are available for use in micro classrooms.

The following individuals are permitted to use a micro classroom (in order of priority):

1. Individuals participating in scheduled training or instruction , under the supervision of an instructor.
2. Authorized individuals doing work associated with the undergraduate program which require the special facilities of the micro classroom on an unscheduled basis.
3. In some circumstances, authorized individuals doing work that does not require the special facilities of the micro classroom when alternative facilities are not available.

Unscheduled users of a micro classroom may be asked to leave if a class or training session is scheduled.

Software Review Center

The Software Review Center is a general access facility, primarily open to faculty for review of educational software for a variety of microcomputers.

Guests from other universities in the company of a member of the Drexel community may review software.